REMARKS

Applicants would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided. Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 10 and 14 will have been amended and claims 22-41will have been submitted for consideration by the Examiner. Claims 10-17 and 22-41 are pending in the present application for consideration. Applicants note that newly-added dependent claims 22-24 and 25-27 are respectively similar to each other but for the fact they respectively depend from independent claims 10 and 14. Applicants further note that newly-added claims 28-41 respectively correspond to claims 10-17 and 22-27, and do not contain "means-plus-function" terminology.

The Examiner has rejected claims 10, 13-15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by SUZUKI (U.S. Patent No. 5,485,004). Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection and submit that the present claims are markedly different from SUZUKI as well as the other references of record. Specifically, Applicants submit that SUZUKI fails to disclose at least that the monitors receive and integrate object images within the focus detection zones *in real time* (emphasis added), as claimed in independent claims 10 and 14 (and newly-added independent claims 28 and 32). To the contrary, in SUZUKI (as discussed *inter alia* at col. 7, lines 7-27) an accumulated charge signal is generated after a lapse of an accumulation time, and this accumulated charge signal is utilized for a subsequent accumulation time control. In the present invention, the claimed monitor is

configured to perform an integration in real time. Support for this claimed feature may be found in Applicants' specification at, *inter alia*, page 29, line 4 to page 30, line 21.

Absent a disclosure in a single reference of each and every element cited in a claim, a *prima facie* case of anticipation cannot be made under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Since the applied reference fails to disclose each and every element recited in independent claims 10 and 14 (and newly added independent claims 28 and 32), these claims, and the claims dependent therefrom, are not anticipated thereby. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of independent claims 10 and 14 (and newly added independent claims 28 and 32) and the claims dependent therefrom, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

With respect to the Examiner's above rejection of dependent claims 13,15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), since these claims are dependent from one of allowable independent claims 10 and 14, which are allowable for at least the reasons discussed *supra,* these dependent claims are also allowable for at least these reasons. Further, all dependent claims recite additional features which further define the present invention over the references of record. It is thus respectfully submitted that all rejected claims are patentably distinct from the references of record.

With respect to the Examiner's above rejection of dependent claims 11-12 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), since these claims are dependent from one of allowable independent claims 10 and 14, which are allowable for at least the reasons discussed *supra,*

these dependent claims are also allowable for at least these reasons. Further, as discussed *supra*, all dependent claims recite additional features which further define the present invention over the references of record. It is thus respectfully submitted that all rejected claims are patentably distinct from the references of record.

With respect to newly-added dependent claims 22-27, it is respectfully submitted that none of the references of record, either taken alone or together in any proper combination thereof, teaches or suggests: that each monitor is exclusively provided for a respective corresponding light receiver (as substantially claimed in claims 22, 25, 36 and 39), at least three light receivers (as substantially claimed in claims 23, 26, 37 and 40), or that the correction value is an output ratio of said plurality of monitors (as substantially claimed in claims 24, 27, 38 and 41).

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that each and every pending claim of the present application meets the requirements for patentability under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103, and respectfully requests the Examiner to indicate the allowance of each and every pending claim in the present application.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the fact that none of the art of record, whether considered alone, or in any proper combination thereof, discloses or suggests the present invention, reconsideration of the Examiner's action and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested and are believed to be appropriate.

Applicants note that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance, and with respect to the allowable features incorporated into claims 10 and 14, should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between these claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability (*i.e.*, for clarification purposes), and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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